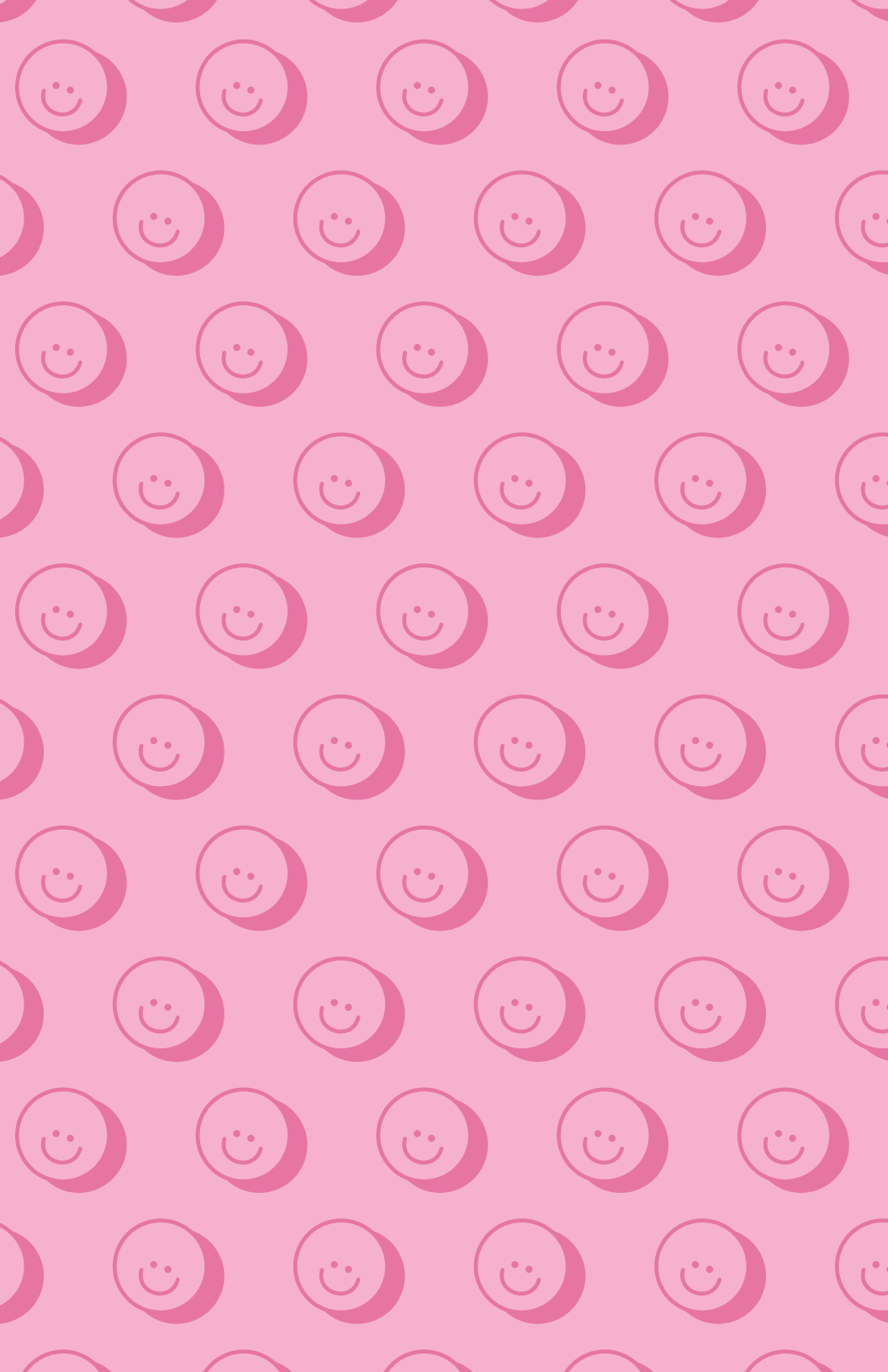

WRFL
RiFLe
SPRING 2021
WRFL turns 33
free for all
88.1 FM
wrfl



Rifle

88.1 FM WRFL

your only alternative left

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WRFL's Mission

As an FCC licensed, non-commercial educational radio station and a student organization at the University of Kentucky, WRFL's mission is to:

1. Provide its members professional training and guidance in radio operation management, program development, and quality broadcast performance.

2. Offer its listeners a source of music, news, and other programming not regularly found through other media outlets in central Kentucky.

3. Support arts and music in the Lexington Area.



Become a part of WRFL!

WRFL is open to both UK students and community members. We have an open training program for DJs every semester! Find out more at **wrfl.fm**!

Letter from WRFL's General Manager

My Dearest Reader,

Thank you for picking up our latest edition of the RiFLe. We really appreciate you taking the time to read it, especially during these wild times.

It's crazy to think that it's been a year since we went fully remote. It's even crazier to think that if our 32nd Birthday Bash had been scheduled a week later, it would've been cancelled. Reflecting on the events of a year ago, I remember it all happening so fast. I remember March 2020 feeling like a whole year in itself. I remember how unbearable the first two months of quarantining were. However, I also remember the resilience that WRFL showed in the face of this pandemic, and how much of a feat it felt to continue broadcasting 24/7.

This station has been kept up due to the hard work of our programming directors and our DJs. WRFL wouldn't be what it is without its DJs, and that fact remains truer than ever as we continue to navigate this pandemic together. For that, I thank them all immensely for their efforts and their cooperation.

To my DJs: hang in there, we will get back in the station eventually. I miss the absolute joy that comes with DJ-ing, and I miss being in the station every day.

To my listeners: keep it locked in all the way to the left. Despite everything that's happened, you can always count on us to broadcast alternative music, and I hope that fact is a shining beacon during these dark times.

I love you all.

Sincerely,
Camille M. Harn
General Manager

Letter from the editor

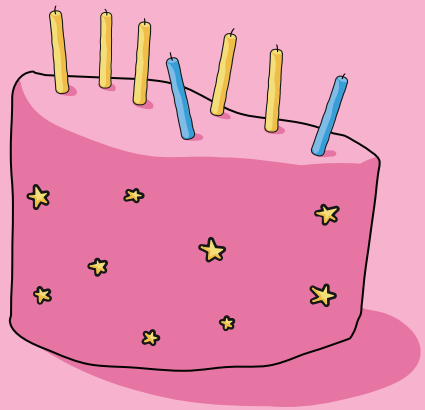
I have to start by thanking everyone who made this edition of the RiFLe possible: all of the artists, writers, and poets who contributed to this issue, my fellow directors, and all of the DJs at WRFL that keep it pushing every day. The contributions made by artists and writers and DJs are what make this publication special, and this zine couldn't exist without them.

And many thanks to YOU, reader, for picking up this issue of the RiFLe and reading it. It's everyone out there who cares about art and music that keeps the world turning.

WRFL is a really special organization, and college radio is one of the final frontiers of state-sanctioned broadcasted madness. We've been on the air for 33 years (as of March 7, 2021–making this our 33rd birthday issue), which is longer than I've been on this earth (and, god willing, WRFL will outlive us all). And it's thanks to all of our DJs and listeners that keep it going, against all of the odds, even in (dare I say it) these unprecedented times. I'm glad that I get to be one piece of the puzzle that makes up the huge picture that is WRFL.

Thanks for tuning in; always and forever, keep it all the way to the left.

Lots of love and all the best,
Claire Thompson
Design Director



Meet the Board of Directors

Questions:

1. Name
2. Position
3. Hometown
4. Dream concert lineup



1. Camille Harn
2. General Manager
3. Lexington, KY
4. food house, 100 gecs, Death Grips



1. Claire Thompson
2. Design Director
3. Lexington, KY
4. 100 gecs/Britney Spears double header



1. Reba Martinez
2. Development Director
3. Juneau, AK
4. Mercedes Sosa, Santana, Celia Cruz



1. Alex Hamilton
2. Library Director
3. Union, KY
4. Empire of the Sun, the Doors, A Tribe Called Quest



1. Rae Bandy
2. Local Music Director
3. Dacula, GA
4. I would absolutely love to see my favorite ladies: Mitski, Chastity Belt, and Girl Friday



1. Emme Dupree
2. Membership Director
3. Nashville, TN
4. Lana del Rey, Childish Gambino, Lady Gaga



1. Lexi O'Donnell
2. Production Director II
3. Bel Air, MD
4. RMFC, Uranium Club, DEVO



1. Trenton Upchurch
2. Programming Director I
3. Columbia, KY
4. Hot Chip, the Kaiser Chiefs, end it off with Kasabian



1. Kristen Gould
2. Music Director
3. Avon Lake, OH
4. 070 Shake, Grimes



1. John Henry Reynolds
2. Production Director I
3. Lexington, KY
4. Steve Roden, Hainbach, and Dave Malloy, but they are forced to become one supergroup



1. Lucas Manning
2. Programming Director II
3. Louisville, KY
4. Car Seat Headrest opening for Suicide



1. Aly Norton
2. Promotions Director I
3. Richmond, KY
4. Choir Boy, the Garden, A.G. Cook, and Lorde <3



1. Aileen Tierney
2. Promotions Director II
3. Louisville, KY
4. Los Campesinos! or Rina Sawayama



1. Mary Clark
2. Graduate Assistant for Events and Marketing
3. Lexington, KY
4. Opeth & Porcupine Tree



1. Ben Allen
2. Station Advisor
3. Cynthiana, KY
4. Khruangbin / Kikagaku Moyo / Sault / Altin Gun

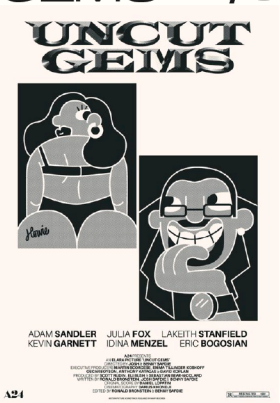


1. Tyler Marie Collins
2. Website Developer
3. Cincinnati, OH
4. Lady Gaga with Janelle Monáe and Rina Sawayama

WRFL Film Club

Every 3rd **Friday** at the **Worsham Cinema** in the **Gatton Student Center** at 8pm

UNCUT GEMS 2/19



dir. Josh & Benny Safdie
2019

BLACK SWAN 3/19



dir. Darren Aronofsky
2010

SUSPIRIA 4/16



dir. Luca Guadagnino
2018

88.1 FM WRFL

Student Organizations and Activities

SPRING 2021 PROGRAMMING SCHEDULE

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
midnight - 1 am	The Witching Hour	R	Matt's Metal Mortuary	★★	Identity Crisis	Weapons of Choice	THE HEAVYSET
1- 2 am							
2 - 3 am	☺	Dave's Deep Dives	The Matterhorn Mix	Neverland Ballroom	Static Shift	WRFL Psychedelicatessen	The Layover
3 - 4 am							
4 - 5 am	Old School Hip-Hop					Serious Moonlite	
5 - 6 am	Darsen's DJ Debut	Sock It to 'Em J.B.	The Big Blue Sports Show			The Listening Hour	No Limits
6 - 7 am							
7 - 8 am	Vagarious Vagabonds	The Happy Hour	i			L	16-Bit Symphony
8 - 9 am							
9 - 10 am	Neverland Ballroom	Democracy Now!					Ages 3 & Up
10 - 11 am		Ben Allen	Squids Will Be Squids	Dave's Deep Dives	Trivial Thursdays	Missed Connections	Blue Yodel #9
11 am - noon							
noon - 1 pm	Down the Hatch	All Tomorrow's Parties	Accents	The Cloud Hour	The Angel of History	Something Completely Different	The Cutting Room Floor
1 - 2 pm							
2 - 3 pm	Static Shift	The Creek	★	Wellness Wednesdays	LexTalk	Cookin Up Beats	e
3 - 4 pm				Classical Musings	Green Talks		
4 - 5 pm	The World Beat	Asleep at the Wheel	Spare Change	Campus Voices	Russian Radio	Emmy J and the Stars	Don't let me get in my zone
5 - 6 pm							
6 - 7 pm	Generations of Jazz	The Layover	Lipstick is Optional	The Last Resort	The Matterhorn Mix	Phantom Power Double Hour	♥
7 - 8 pm							
8 - 9 pm	King's Corner	The Percy Trout Hour	Classroom Concerts	WRFL Live	After Hours	Side Effects May Include...	WRFL Psychedelicatessen
9 - 10 pm							
10 - 11 pm	Real Vampire Hours	Old School Hip-Hop	Pulp	The Pacobilly Hour	The Musical Box	Signal Boost	Serious Moonlite
11 pm - midnight							





Ronin Moore (@roninarthaus)
Respect On Her Name
gouache and ink on watercolor paper, 11" x 17", 2020

"Black women have always led the way in this country. In every movement for equality, for human rights, for decency and love and respect for our fellow man, you will find Black women doing the hard work that others will not. Yet rarely do they receive the respect and recognition they deserve. Give us our flowers while we're still here."

student artists

The following is a selection of current art students and recent art alumni from the University of Kentucky.

Chelsea Clarke

@rosemarypress
rosemarypress.com







(above) *Reach*
soft sculpture installation
(pillows, rug, pink tube, a
house, and a ceramic cat)

(right) *Reach* - details

This installation is a part of Chelsea's MFA thesis show, *Self-Soothe*, which is currently on view on her website, rosemarypress.com, where you can see the installation views of the other works in the show as well as recordings of the three performances that were a part of the exhibition.

Meredith Coffey

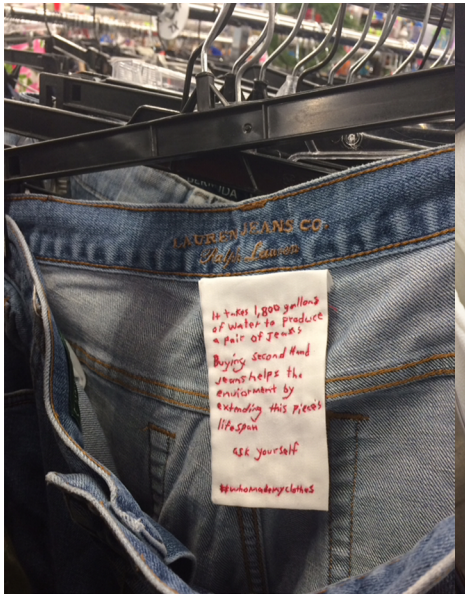
@meredithcoffeyart
meredithcoffey.com

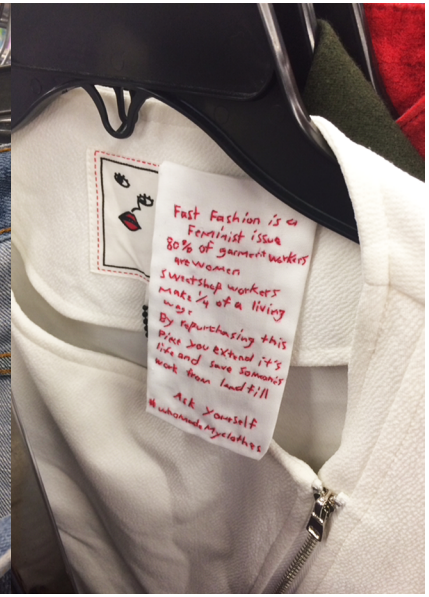


Mini Thank You
second-hand red satin, white polyester
2020



Thanks For Nothing
fabric and beads
2020







(above) *Reading Labor*
fabric, thread
2020

(left) *McMinimum*
fry box, beads
2021

My work addresses the politically charged topic of the environment, with a primary concern for consumer and production waste that negatively impacts our shared planet. The geological Anthropocene era greatly influences my artistic approach and practice. The Anthropocene era's sole focus is on how human activity continues to be the dominant negative influence on climate change and the degradation of the environment. My studio practice, based in materiality, gravitates towards everyday materials and objects that are familiar and often used in our daily lives. Disseminating information about the harmful consumption of single-use products and fast fashion is the focus of my research and studio practice.

Ellan Luna

@ellan_joy



Heedless
oil on canvas
30″x40″

My current work revolves around the very human desire to control that which is uncontrollable, to interact and bargain with unseen forces which operate beyond our understanding. Through printmaking and painting, these allegorical narratives prompt the viewer to reflect upon the ever-complicated idea of free will and consider how they wield it in their own lives.



Seer
stone lithography & watercolor
17″x15.25″



Resolve
stone lithography & watercolor
21″x17.5″

Maddy McGill

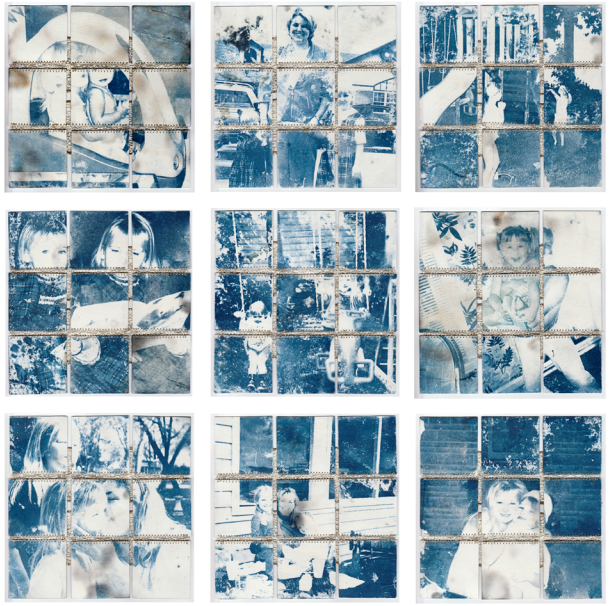
@maddyemcgill
maddyemcgill.wixsite.com/maddymcgill



Refrigerator Scribbles
(with detail - right)
childhood coloring
transferred onto fabric,
fringe, wood







(above) *what if we lived on the ceiling?*
(with details)
used fabric, glass beads, lights

(left) *Golden Daze*
cyanotypes on coffee filters with backing, ribbon, thread

Aly Norton

@coollisasimpson



How to Cook for a Man
collage
2020



Better Than Most People
collage
2020

Lexi O'Donnell

@laodly



Untitled
collage
2020



Untitled
collage
2020

Terence Powell

@tmpowell2

Eat up, babes!



Unbound
2019



Them
2020

Reagan Profit

instagram: @reaganelizabethart
tik tok: @rea.liz.art



Haze
oil on canvas
48″x36″
2020





(top down)
To Be Continued
oil on canvas
72″x48″
2020

Figure C
oil on canvas
72″x48″
2020

My work largely dives into the psychological experience of being human. The meaning and motivation behind my work centers around loneliness, connection to the world, the people in it, and myself.

Taya Senn



Audrey
oil on canvas
36”x36”
2020



Lauren
oil on canvas
36”x36”
2020

My work focuses largely on process. My goal is to find out how much I can distort a portrait, either by addition or attrition, while still creating a piece that someone can connect with in the end.

Claire Thompson

@clairewitchproject1999
clairethompsonart.com

My work is about being campy and being gay. <3



I've been a very bad girl
yarn and monks cloth
18″x22″
2021



Something Wicked This Way Cums
oil on canvas
36″x48″
2021

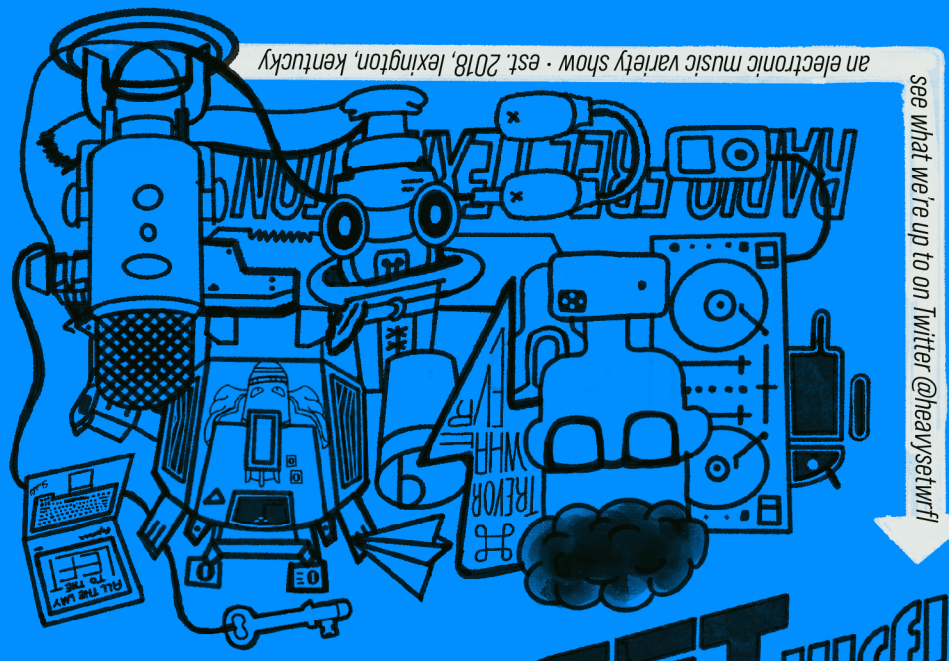


two lesbians most wicked
monks cloth and yarn
17″x13″
2021

THE WITCHING HOUR

sunday mornings
midnight - 2

88.1 FM WrFl



an electronic music variety show · est. 2018, lexington, kentucky

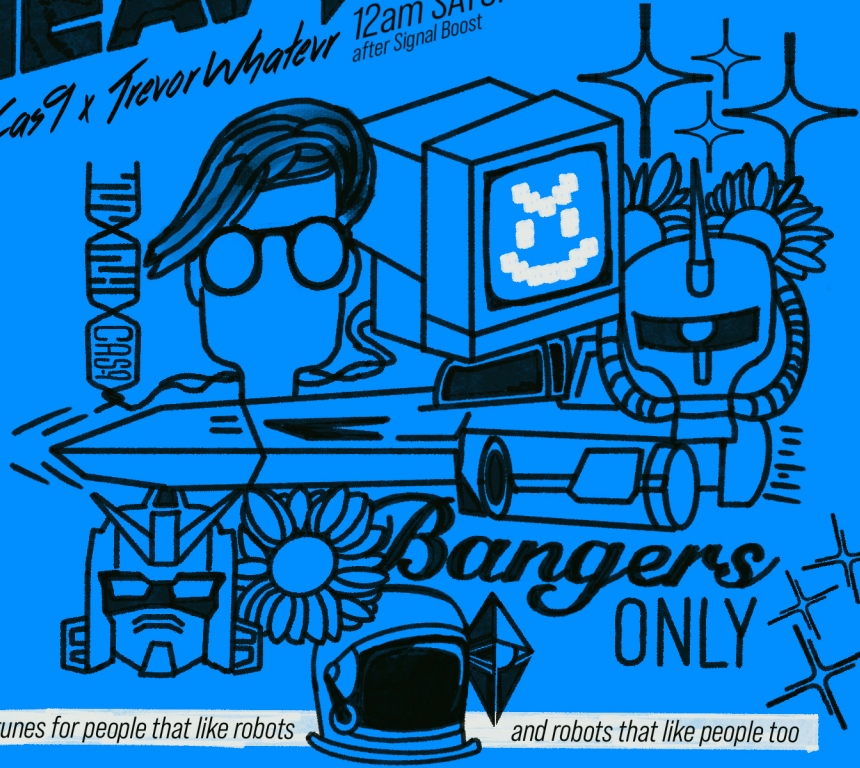
see what we're up to on Twitter @heavysetwrfl

THE HEAVYSET

WrFl LEXINGTON

with Cas9 x Trevor Whatevr

12am SATURDAYS
after Signal Boost



catch you on the flipside, friends

tunes for people that like robots

and robots that like people too

Erupting Like a Phoenix From the Dollar Bin

John Vance

I am a record collector. I also like to fancy myself as an intrepid explorer, because I've spent two decades now voyaging across the Bluegrass realm --and beyond!--in search of an elusive, shapeshifting wantlist of Spindle Holey Grails. For while the driving routes from my home to the key local record stores are as familiar and well-trod as the footpath from my couch to the refrigerator to the bathroom and back, I have found much upside in venturing into uncharted territories that might be marked *hic sunt cow barns and John Deere ATVs* on "R. Crumb's Official Vinyl Vulture Map of Kentuckiana," if such a map existed--which, sadly, it does not. Although I suppose I could make one myself by printing off a PDF map of my phone's location history and looking at the red pointer icons: *Yep, there I was, at that grungy flea mall just a few miles south of Shepherdsville. And oh, look over here! That's my friend's aunt's house in Harrodsburg, where there were "a lot of really good old records in her garage," my friend had proclaimed with utter, fateful confidence in his assertion. And hey, there's the Goodwill in Versailles--a noteworthy discovery in and of itself, because I didn't even know Versailles had a Goodwill until I happened to drive past it on the way to my dad's house.*

The animating theory behind my trailblazing expeditions is that it pays to target vendors that don't look every single damn record up on Discogs before slapping price tags them, so that I can maybe sneak in and scoop up a few thrift scores--perhaps by disguising them within a larger stack of throwaway "decoy" records that distract the cashier's attention from what I'm really after[1]. And on sporadic occasions that are probably far less frequent than I would like to admit to myself, such scores do happen. But most of the time, my journeys yield nothing at all. Except, obligatorily, for that grimy film of mildewy scum that collects on one's fingertips after feverishly flipping (and flipping, and flipping) for a blur of hours, only to find nothing better than a raggedy jacket of Grand Funk Railroad's fourth album that--through some cruel, long-ago twist of its provenance plot, the dramatic script of which is actually kind of fun to speculate upon now that I think about it--somehow contains an even more raggedy LP of "Mantovani's Favorite Latin Melodies for Swingin' Lovers, Volume Six Thousand and Seventy-Three."

So usually, I go home home empty-handed. But I never go home empty-headed--or at least not completely so, even though it sometimes feels that way. For there is an *art* to crate-digging. And as with any other kind of art, the repetition of the same tedious activity, over and over, will gradually crystallize into ingrained knowledge and finessed technique. For instance: Let's say that one day, at a flea market in Campbellsville that, without any apparent cognitive dissonance, manages to merge the dual motifs of Native American dreamcatchers and the Confederate States of America, I encounter an unknown (to me, anyway) record that looks super promising. *Wow, these guys look pretty cool, I think to myself as I study the gritty, black-and-white photo of the band members on the back cover. They're all just kinda standing around--with hip that, but three of them are wearing sunglasses, and that one dude even has a leather jacket! Hell yeah, man. I'm gonna look this one up on my phone.* And so I do just that... only to find that the band's actual songs sound like the week-old, slightly-microwaved leftovers of Huey Lewis and the News. *Duly noted,* I note, dully and disappointedly, to myself. But hey, at least I've learned that if I ever see that crappy record again, I can just skip right on past it, thus improving my overall flipping efficiency.

Over time, hundreds of such micro-learning experiences pile up and cross-reference each other to form an eternally expanding--and never even anywhere close to comprehensive--mental encyclopedia of crate-digging esoterica. It's like a field guide to identifying the cool records that jibe with your musical tastes. Or, at least (but never insignificantly), the records that sell for a decent amount of money on the internet.

Which leads me to another skill that develops from combing through untold moldy basement-loads of future landfill fodder: an eye for the rarities. The gems. The Spindle Holey Grails. The ultra-limited private pressings that seem to exist mostly in rumor, until a copy pops up somewhere and swaggers its way onto Popsike's "Top 50 $ellers of the Week" list. As with anything in life that involves any sort of heterogeneous complexity--which is basically everything in life--it is impossible to impose any kind of all-snuggling blanket description onto the vast and often contradictory smorgasbord of "rare records" floating around out there. But I will suggest that, among the records I'm hunting for at least, there is an inconsistent yet also insistent tendency toward the "low budget" design aesthetic. This tendency, as it

1. While it has not happened to me--not yet, at least--I have heard frightful tales of sellers who look up the value of records after they have been brought to the counter. I shudder at the mere thought of such helplessness and despair.

were, arose from sheer necessity: If an upstart punk band in 1970s Cleveland, OH couldn't afford to press any more than 300 copies of their band's self-released EP, then they sure as hell couldn't afford to hire the dude who did the cover art for Rush's latest Billboard chartbuster. (Not that they would have wanted to in the first place, because the lo-fi visual vibe also, of course, wound up being wielded as a deliberate manifesto of a certain subversive, anti-establishment political ethos. But that's not only a whole 'nother essay, but an essay that has already been written a whole bunch of times by a whole bunch of people. And besides, the very fact that you are reading a publication like *The RiFLe* means that you already know a whole lot about the bombed-out topic of "indie underground vs. corporate mainstream"--probably way more than you wish were even knowable in the first place).

To wit: The more a band's record cover (or sleeve) looks like it was printed in the drummer's grandma's basement on a Mesozoic Era mimeograph machine that was almost out of ink, the more likely I am to snatch it out of the bin and whisper, *"Well hello there, and who might you be, you beautiful, bewitching little bastard?"*

It truly is a giddy rush to find a record that is not only rare and valuable, but also jam-packed with such rip-roaring scorchers that you worry whether the FBI is now tracking you for possession of a DIY explosive device manufactured in a garage with cheapo Stratocaster copies and unhinged vocal spit. When it happens, you may experience what I consider to be the most pleasurable internal conflict around: To keep, or not to keep? *(This record is awesome, and I love it... but do I* ***$150 from an eBay auction*** *love it?)*

Sadly, though, like the records themselves, such instances are vanishingly rare--and fool's gold is a far more likely prospect. Because for every copy of a first pressing of Index's debut LP (DC Records, 1967) or a literal coagulated blood-splattered Psycho Surgeons 7"[2], there are several gazillion records that look rare--and might even be very rare--but which are worthless nevertheless. This is usually because the quality of music on them has stumbled into a wretched doom trap that's analogous to being "too wealthy to qualify for food stamps, but too poor to pay your utility bills": the songs suck, but they don't suck so badly that they become uproariously and legendarily sucky--like, say, The Shaggs. In most cases, the songs merely suck limply, meanderingly, and slightly embarrassingly. It's kind of depressing, really.

This leads me--finally--to one record in particular, and the one that inspired me to write this essay in the first place. I first glimpsed it several months ago, as it languished in a dusty bin at a local thrift shop for 99 cents. I almost flipped right past it, but it was on an obscure label that I'd never heard of, and I decided that it was just barely low-budget-looking enough to be worth researching on my phone. So I did. *Meh. Duly noted.* I dropped it back into the bin and left it there.

I go to that store frequently, so I saw it on the next several visits, too. Always in the exact same spot in the exact same bin. One day, for reasons I am only now beginning to understand, I picked it up and examined it more closely. "One Evening in Chicago - Bob Franke in Concert," the title on the black-and-white cover read. Released in 1982, on Great Divide Records. The cover photo depicted Bob Franke himself, sitting in a chair with a big book in his lap. His facial expression conveyed distraction, pensiveness, and excitement, all at once. I wondered whether, at the moment the photo was snapped, he was thinking, *"At long last, the time has come! Yes, here it is, ladies and gentlemen: My definitive artistic statement. And maybe even the start of my big break into the music business!"*

My imagination then began painting an even more elaborate "portrait" of Bob Franke--about his feelings leading up to this recording, the "climactic" release of the record, and how he might feel now if I were to inform him that a copy of it had been wallowing in a dollar bin for over five months now, lost to the memory of basically everyone. I felt a sudden twinge in my gut. Sadness? Never mind; I slid it back into its place in the bin.

But I couldn't stop thinking about it. Inexplicably, it loitered around in the back of my mind. It tugged, gently, for my attention, like a stray cat that I fed a piece of deli ham to a month ago and has refused to leave me alone ever since.

It took me a while to figure out why. But when I did, I hurried back to the store, now anxious that someone else might have already bought it. But sure enough, there it was. In the same spot. In the same bin. As if no one else in town felt that it was even worthy of a quick Discogs sales history search.

I am now the owner of Bob Franke's "One Evening in Chicago" LP. But I have not actually given it a spin yet. I do have the means to give it a spin, yet I cannot do so at this particular time--for reasons I will explain shortly. I'm not even sure what genre of music it is; Discogs lumps it into the category of "Folk, World, and Country," which is astoundingly unhelpful. But the lyrics are printed on the back cover, and I have to say: *some of them are pretty dang evocative.* Like this one: "My favorite women refuse to live on shelves... in the evening, they dance scientifically." Or:

> God knows I get embarrassed
> when I think of all the times
> I used to pout, and spout about the
> poet's plight,
> But so long as sentimental sugar
> salesmen tell it wrong
> And make it big, I'll make it small
> and tell it right.

I should emphasize again that my idle musings on whatever wistfulness Bob Franke may (or may not) feel about the eventual bargain-priced fate of "One Evening in Chicago" are just that: idle musings. *These musings are a work of fiction. Any resemblance to the actual Bob Franke, living or dead, or actual events in Bob Franke's life and/or emotional well-being, are purely coincidental.*

2. Both of these records are on my ~~wantlist~~ needlist. So if you happen to find one of them at a Salvation Army somewhere, I am asking you, nicely, to just put it back where you found it, leave the store immediately, and then shoot me a text apprising me of its location.

That being said, these musings are meaningful to me. This is probably a good time for me to drop in a disclaimer affirming that, as a Caucasian cisgender male with a privileged upbringing, I realize that I have very little to complain about in the grand, struggling scheme of things. But nonetheless, like my imaginary caricature of Bob Franke, I do know a thing or two about shattered dreams.

Just a few years ago, I was an Assistant Professor of English at a university in Virginia. But I am also an alcoholic and an addict. Over the past several years, my life has been a series of catastrophic self-detonations, with the lives of the people I love the most--and who love me back the most--suffering as collateral damage. When I look back on it, I see nightmarish firework storms shooting out yucky-colored sparks that fizzle out and then fall, spinning wildly, disintegrating before collapsing to the cold ground. And when I finally wake up from the horror show of which I was the self-appointed producer, director, and star, all I can see around me is a wasteland of sickly cinders and trillions of tiny ash particles that seem impossible to rebuild into any kind of habitable shelter, to sculpt back into a harmonious shape.

This self-inflicted apocalyptic fallout is why I cannot listen to the Bob Franke record right now. My stereo system--and all of my records--are in storage. I haven't reassembled enough parts of my exploded life to have a good place to use them yet.
But at the time of this writing, I have been clean and sober for almost ten months. There was once a time when I wrote lots of essays, stories, and poems. I even received some modest acclaim on a few occasions. But it has been over ten years since I have written or published anything at all. And this very essay may not be a proper "comeback" either, because at the time of this writing, I am still writing it, so haven't even submitted it for publication consideration yet. The editor could still reject it for, say, running over the word limit--which it has already done.

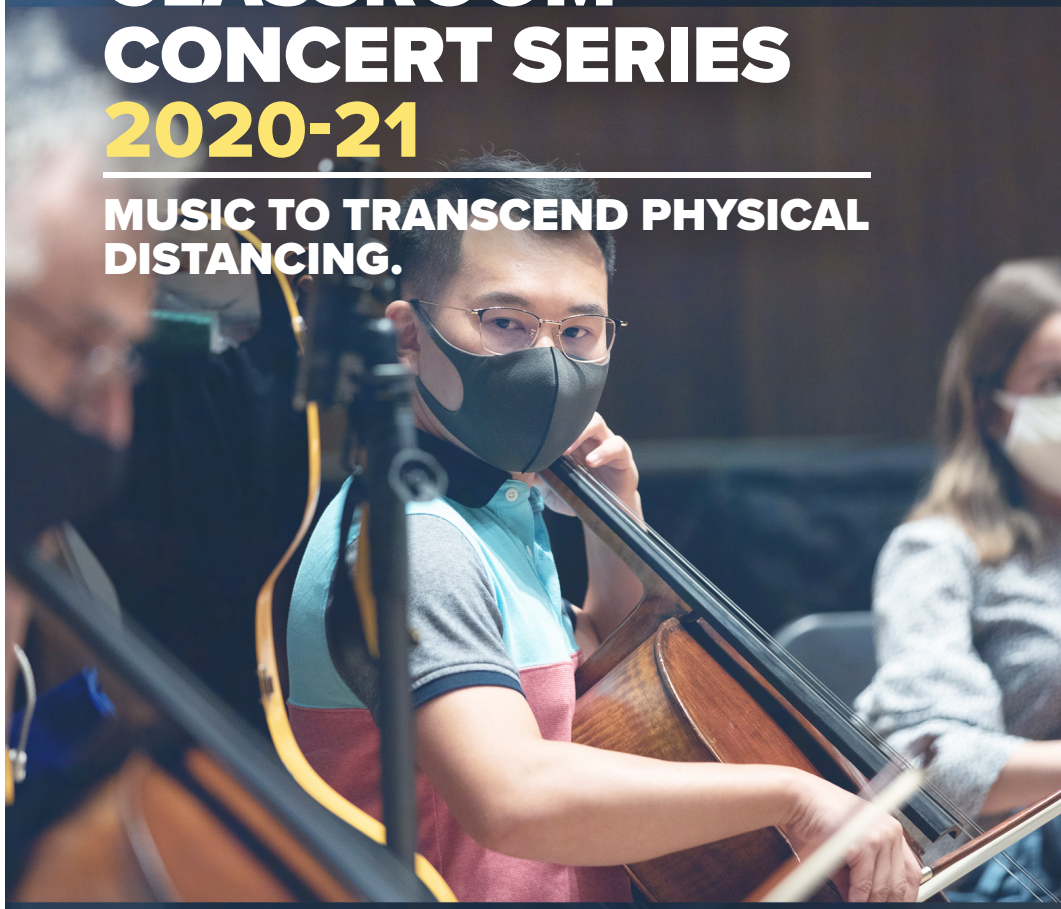
But I am writing. And it feels good. And that is something.

So here we are together, at the end of the essay: my fantastical cartoon version of Bob Franke and I. We've just awoken from a terrible dream, and now we're just kinda standing around in our soot-blackened clothes, squinting dazedly at a gray January afternoon that, while gloomy, is somehow so bright that it hurts our eyes. Bob and I are still not sure which one of us pulled the other one up, and out, of that gutter of sucking oblivion that we thought we would never escape. But we also agree that it doesn't really matter. ■

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The Contemporary Revival of Classical Music

Aileen Tierney

One day, when I opened the popular multi-media app Tiktok, I was greeted by a familiar surprise. Tiktok's algorithm could be scary-accurate sometimes, and this was a prime example.

The viral video that popped onto my screen was a college-aged dude (implied by his "Columbia University" sweatshirt) hitting the whip-- a popular dance that dominated the hallways of high schools in 2015, along with the nae-nae and the quan. However, this blast from the past wasn't the jarring aspect since millenial-zoomer cusps such as myself have continued hitting that whip even when their roommate's 15-year-old sister has told them that she has no idea what you're talking about when you reminisce about the Good Ol Days when social media dance trends involved violent, full-body movement. No, the strange part to me was the music used.

The revival of classical music with my age group had been something that I noticed happening gradually, but kicked into full-throttle within the past year. At first, it was pieces considered "normie" by classical musicians, such as Claude Debussy's Clair-de-Lune, or Satie's Gymnopedies. These are pleasant, easily-digestible, likeable-- Fisher Price Baby's First Classical Music Song, if you will. What I wasn't expecting was to see this zillenial hit the whip to Camille Saint-Saens' cello solo from the full-orchestra piece Carnival of the Animals.

"The Swan" is one of those pieces for cellists. Craning your head against the closed door that led to the audition room, where your competitor played his or her 2-3 minute solo of choice, usually following the required scale, but a preview to whet the judge's appetite for the incoming assigned musical excerpt and sight-reading passage. You hear the muffled first three notes of "The Swan"-- you nod your head. Good. A solid choice, "The Swan." Debuting in Suzuki Book 6, it's a piece not considered too technically dense, easily prepared at the last minute but still enriching to practice again and again in preparation for The Audition. A slow piece where any wrong note honks like a real swan, it showcased multiple aspects: vibrato quality, phrasing, bow-speed smoothness, and left-hand prowess at fourth position and onwards. I had actually played "The Swan" for an audition that I have designated as The Audition, the nerve-wracking tryout for the advanced orchestra at my performing arts high school.

I wasn't expecting something so niche as a piece that I performed for a serious audition to go viral, amidst tens of thousands of lay-persons that had never played in an orchestra. However, I found it a logical progression due to the media influence of the generation. One important factor is the success of Studio Ghibli movies, most notably Japanese composer Joe Hisaishi's work on "Spirited Away" and "Howl's Moving Castle." Almost every Tiktok user recognizes the introspective piano-plinks of "One Summer's Day," or the sweeping waltz of "The Merry Go Round of Life." Another could be the interdisciplinary nature and popularity of video games, which personally I believe (along with films) contain some of the most prolific work of classical composers.

But whatever the reason, I'm glad classical music is becoming more mainstream. Classical instruments such as the violin, cello, and piano endured through the centuries due to their versatile sounds, and hopefully have a place in contemporary soundtracks.





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A Message from The Humpday Bump:

How are ya doin party people!? My name is Zach Monk host of the Humpday Bump! Hosted every Wednesday until the.... whatever. I want to declare as Lexingtonians we will overcome. We are gonna make this year our year. And we will continue to funk out in the free world.
-peace and love. ZM

An interview with

Bear Medicine

by Matt Gibson

2021 finds Lexington favorites Bear Medicine doing some major soul-searching on their sophomore LP, "Dog is Love," an album of anthemic folk rock and lush chamber lullabies. Songwriter and guitarist Josh Wright's melodies are supported by a breadth of instrumentation that includes cello, bass, flute, violin, and percussion, performed by some of Lexington's most prolific and seasoned musicans. Wright's signature falsetto vocals are once-again accompanied by singer Kim Conlee's backing harmonies to beautiful effect on a new collection of timeless songs. Josh gave us the scoop on the new record, the history of the group, and his recommendations on the Lexington music scene.

MATT GIBSON (MG): You've been making music as Bear Medicine for nearly a decade now; could you give us a brief overview of the history of the band?

JOSH WRIGHT (JW): Bear Medicine has really lived up to its animal namesake - seasons of exploring and foraging for new sounds and songs, followed by long periods of hibernation. The band had its true genesis in the Rosemont Garden area of town when I moved in with Seth Murphy. At the time, I was working on solo fingerstyle guitar and obsessed with the likes of John Fahey, Robbie Basho, Jack Rose, Marissa Anderson etc. Seth and I found a mutual love of instrumental acoustic music and started working on our own compositions. Shortly thereafter, Kim Conlee joined the group on flute and piano, and Severn Edmondson rounded out the group with drums and percussion. We spent those years working on songs, touring the Southeast, and releasing our first record, "The Moon Has Been All My Life." As time went on and life became busy for all, Bear Medicine decided to take a small hiatus that ended up lasting several years. In 2018, a new group had formed for a larger and more orchestrated sound. This time around, the band was filled out with Scott Wilmoth, Emily Woxihara, Cecilia Wright, Kim Conlee, Sam McWilliams, Robby Cosenza, and myself. We spent the next years playing as many shows as possible and recording our latest album, "Dog is Love," with local musician and recording wizard Otto Helmuth.

MG: "Dog is Love" is the first new release in over six years; how has the sound of the band changed over time?

JW: Well, the band has definitely grown in size and instrumentation; lots more vocals, heavily arranged strings, and we finally had a bass player! But I think the core of the sound remains. The songs are meant to be exploratory and delve into the questioning aspect of us humans. So, while there may be bigger guitar sounds and arrangements this time around, we are still trying to write catchy songs that make people think, not just a stagnant rehashing of old pop idioms.

MG: "Hymn for Heathens" is a pretty unforgettable song that I remember from when the first iteration of the band used to play it live. How far back does the songwriting for this album go? Did you compose the songs with the intention of making an album, or did it gradually come together over time?

JW: It's funny how it all works out. With "Hymn for Heathens," we recorded a version of that song years ago, but it just wasn't the right time to release it. Another song on the record, "Elephant & Mouse," was written over a decade ago. I had always wanted to use the song but never seemed to land on a version that I liked. I feel that, at least for me, records tend to write themselves over a long period of time. Finally, you find the group of songs that have a common theme and thread that runs through and group them together.

MG: As musicians and creators I think we're always striving to create something that defies an easy definition, but if you had to label the sound of the new album, how would you describe it?

JW: I'm not trying to reinvent the wheel. These songs are nothing more than musings on life and questions we all have. All of my favorite songwriters never seem to focus on any sort of genre placement - you just find a melody and let it do the work for you.

MG: Last year didn't present many opportunities to play live due to the pandemic, but what were your favorite venues to play in Lexington and where are you looking forward to playing once things begin to reopen?

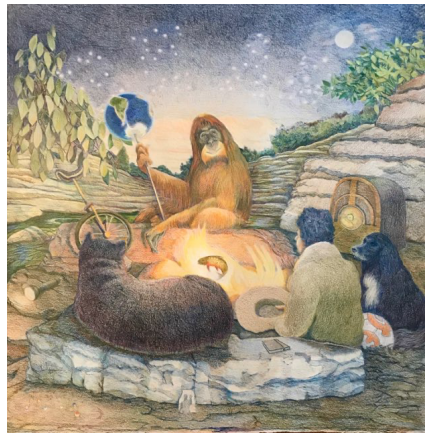
JW: Well, thats a tough one. We are a small town, but we do have a bit of a range as far as venues go. The Burl is great, and the sound is top notch! Al's is an old standby that has so much nostalgia built in for me that it's hard to pass up a gig. But, at the end of the day, nothing beats a solid show at The Green Lantern. Maybe it's friends behind the bar, maybe it's the smell of the old stale beer creeping out of the wood floors, but I absolutely love playing there.

MG: Do you have any recommendations of other local bands that folks should check out?

JW: Lexington is a small town, and not a lot of people pay attention to the local music scene here. They are fools. So many wonderful and diverse musicians! Warren Byrom, Daniel Case, Frigid Kitty, Letters of Acceptance, The Fanged Robot, Dr. Paul, Felchers, Western Movies, Everyone Lives Everyone Wins, Otto Helmuth, Ancient Warfare, Derek Spencer, Small Batch, Italian Beaches, Big Fresh, Swamp Hawk, Chris Dennison..... I could go on forever!

MG: Where can folks find out more about Bear Medicine and the new album?

JW: @bearmedicineusa on Instagram or bearmedicine.bandcamp.com is probably the best bet! Follow us on Facebook @bearmedicineusa as well!





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Poetry by

Christopher McCurry

Christopher McCurry believes everyone should write poems and that everyone can. You can find him online at christophermccurry.com or workhorsewriters.com.

To the Suicide on Top of the Parking Garage

So you've made a stage
just for you and below
is an audience of faces.

One a clock.
One your mother's closet.
One a womb drying on a rock.

What can you do but jump
now that the pulley
is rigged for flight.

The night sky is red and blue
and a couple on a date
stops to watch you.

You can't see their mouths
but you think in his is an egg,
hers a tiny hammer.

Ode to Whoever Stole My Credit Card Number from the Gas Station Pump

I too like cheap travel
fast food and sex toys.

I got that same hankering
to forget myself. I get

you've got to be a little
desperate, a little squeezed

to earn your luxuries the hard
way, your PS4 game center

gift cards, your ubers, your lyfts.
Some of what you wanted

I didn't even recognize--they didn't
even have a name I'm accustomed to.

Like a language you've learned
to speak that's all desire--all rush.

I'm sorry I only have the twenty
declined charges, the one approved,

through which to know you.
Where ever that plane takes you,

I hope there is at least one gas station,
and one person, well, like me.

Stamina

When the doctor listens
to my heart
she hears in there
the man walking
from room to room,
cleaning up,
moving furniture,
taking down photos
and hanging new ones
in their place.

I get tired easily,
I explain as her
hand explores
my stomach.

You should eat less
fruit, she tells me.

The man in my heart
lies on the floor
in the kitchen
now that no one
is listening.

He taps his head
on the tile.

Do you feel depressed?

Anxious sometimes.

What does it feel like?

Like I haven't been
breathing and have
to remind myself
how it's supposed
to be done again.

Does it happen when
you are around people?

Mostly when alone.

How is your social life?

The man in my heart
raises his fist, flips
up his middle finger.

It's okay, I guess.

She wants to know
how many times
a week I do
certain activities:

give someone a hug
talk to my mom
walk outside barefoot
drink directly from the tap
think about death positively
rub my shins
air dry after a shower

Approximations are the best I can do.

I'd like to take another listen she asks
more than tells.

I know it's not the best time, for the
man in my heart,
but I raise my shirt once more. The
doctor finds him
singing. It would be beautiful, if he
wasn't so bad at it.

Poetry by

Tina Parker

These three poems are part of the poetry collection titled Lock Her Up that is forthcoming from Accents Publishing. Not that long ago in our history, women were labeled as "other" and committed to asylums to cure them of perceived difference, and to keep them silent. These poems spring from historical research into the lives of women labeled as "other"—whether that be witch, insane, or hysterical. These are the women who give us urban myths, ghost stories, and all-too-true horror stories of women locked up and abused in asylums.

You can find more work from Tina Parker at tina-parker.org and on instagram @tetched_poet.

The day they came for me

I sliced open the sun
I walked the tight rope
And touched the moon

I drank stars that day
I danced with a tree
Climbed into thunder

The day they came for me
I cartwheeled into the sea
And sang open the snow.

Patient #2649: Arrival

God save me. God could not.
Safe here away from him, or
nearer. A door. Another
(door after door) and I open. I
open my bags. They've emptied
(me). They've taken
her. God (be with me) let me
keep the baby. I've not had time
to finish her blanket.
The final door. Open(s).

Release

The minister says I'm alive
Through grace says
They may never know
What rendered me silent
He tells them to pray
The spirit gives several messages
In other tongues
Praise the Lord
They shout
Praise the Lord
The women place a Bible
Under my pillow I dream
My voice returns
I point to the minister
But no one listens.

Poetry by

Leatha Kendrick

Leatha Kendrick lives and works in Lexington, and you can find more of her work at leathakendrick.com.

Any small thing can sve y0ou

even a typo

taking away *a*

heaving o aside an open

escape route

tghtning the sieve

that's leaking lve or

p0utting in an egg

ready to hatch

somekind

some kindness

somekindness you

don't think

(don't

 think)

you deserve

)It's just a feeling -it isn't going to kill you.(

Persephone Opens Another Bottle of Red

After all this time the signs hovered clear
enough –blank sky of reverie cut by
raven wings, her uneasy urge to leave
the earth—the earth uneven giving
way beneath the blood-red bloom she
had to have. Hades reaching through
to claim her. His hands all smoke and
stone grown tight around her wrist tow
her headfirst through the bottle's neck
into that huge roofed dark. Oh right
beforehand she'd crave that skyless
place where even as queen she might
sit dead in her chair, her gifts forgotten
shades. All she wanted was away from
thought's steady calcite drip— insistent
beat coagulating the blue vault of sky,
hardening the riotous fields, the branch
heavy with fruits. And waking, after,
robed in her own dank odor, dying
to dig her way out, certain she can't
– only the slip of time keeps breath
treading its old passageways, circling
back to a notion of light and air. To
the heart's open eye.

from And Luckier (Accents Publishing, 2020)

Just Trying to Survive Here The committee of organisms that comprises me

decides to lie down in the grass
to smell, hear, see. Nose to
earth,
stomach-first, we touch the dirt
with most of the front of this mother-ship
that is my flesh and skin.

How many viruses can we
 not see around us? How free
are we, really, from contagion?
What climbs aboard? where
will it ride? what does it need
in order to survive? It needs
inside – it needs

a cell it can invade
and force (at gunpoint?)
to replicate–
 virusvirusvirusvirusvirus
virusvirusvirusvirusvirusvirusvirus
it can't exist without us
the actions of living cells

to keep its small chain of being going.
News flash: viruses do not exist
 outside the hosts they ravage
to transport them.

They've got hosts to spare –
all those not yet touched –
the happily (so far) negative us.
We are its eternal life.
 Hosthosthosthost:
It's looking to party,

wreak havoc, set off alarms,
congest cells with cytokines,
suffocate them, and move on.
 Survival is its thing.

Host host host
Harder when the cells it needs
 [(anti-)socially distanced]
remain out of reach. The end
of (crowd) life as we have known it.

Poetry and photography by

Shaena Neal

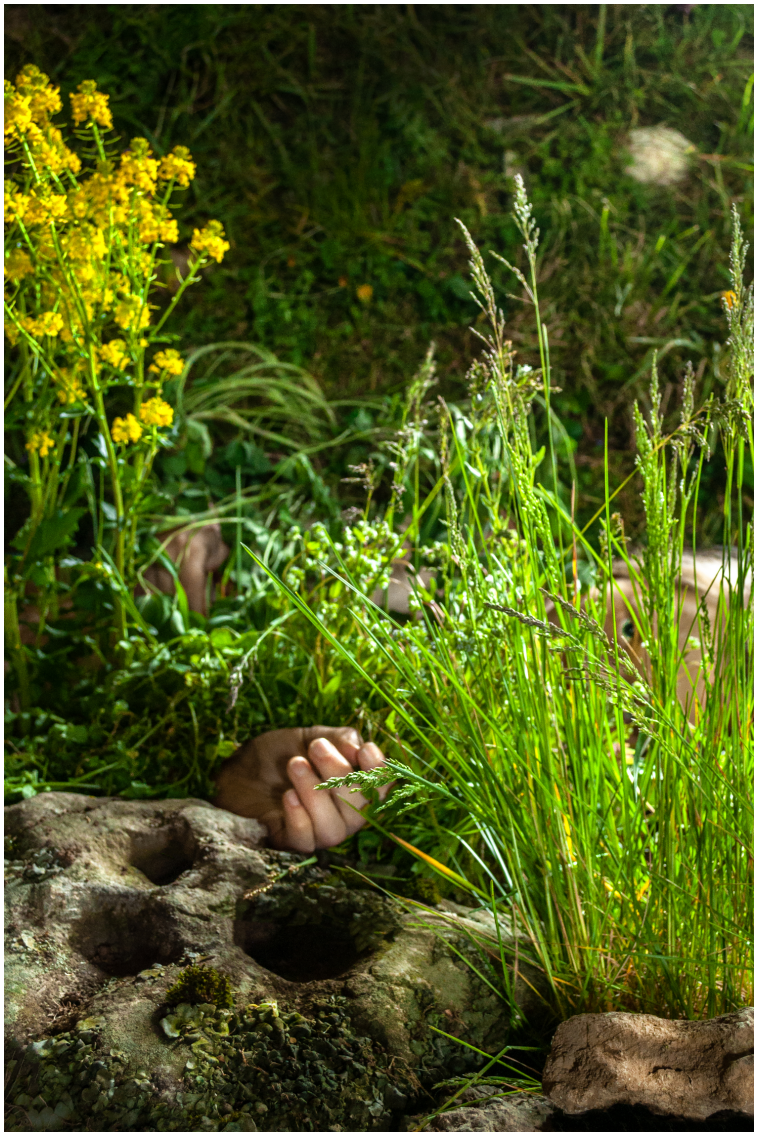
You can find more work from Shaena Neal at shaenaneal.com.

Sirens rang out in the wind. A reckoning echoed softly over the hillside. Then, the earth stood still, as this tiny world toppled upside down. But the siren sang ever clearer.

Do you hear it now? Now that the world isn't spinning, buzzing in your mind? You must see. You must feel it. Listen for the whisper in the night. Has it given you a fright? Listen. Don't yet put up a fight. For the fault is deeper than first sight. Our palms are being nailed tight.

Dig into the earth, feel the vibration in your bones. Watch as the ground shudders, the grass shivering in the smoke filled breeze. The fire is raging, but the embers light up the shadows all around. These unintended secrets, shining unbearably bright in the darkest of nights.

It seems to me this world has been twisted for quite some time, that the mute sky has finally gone and left us behind. To walk amongst our own shadows and grasp but these scars we leave behind. I could tell you to roll back over, when you reclaim both your eyes. That the seasons to come will not suffer, but that would be a lie.



REMEMBERING SOPHIE

September 17, 1986 - January 30, 2021

Claire Thompson

original photo by Lea Colombo for i-D magazine

The loss of Scottish-born musician, record producer, and DJ SOPHIE has been for me, and many others, an unimaginably heartbreaking tragedy. Words cannot begin to encompass all the ways in which SOPHIE and her work were revolutionary, groundbreaking, trailblazing, and transcendent. Undoubtedly, SOPHIE's work has changed music forever.

So much of what is great about experimental pop and electronic music right now we owe to SOPHIE and her contemporaries, and in the wake of her passing, it's essential to try and be happy about all that she has done, even though her career has been cut so tragically short. It's both incredible to witness the body of work she has left behind, while simultaneously being heartbroken about how much music we will never get to hear from her.

SOPHIE never stopped making waves ever since she first emerged in the early-2010s as a friend of the label PC Music (founded by A. G. Cook), which certainly has been one of the biggest influences on pop and electronic music for going on 10 years now. We'll be looking back for decades at the radical firestarter that PC Music and friends have all been for decades to come, including, and perhaps even especially, SOPHIE.

It's tracks like *MSMSMSM* and *FACESHOPPING* and *PONYBOY* and *IMMATERIAL* that remind me why SOPHIE's career is unmatched in its innovation. In a 2015 Rolling Stone interview, she once said:

> I think all pop music should be about who can make the loudest, brightest thing. That, to me, is an interesting challenge, musically and artistically. And I think it's a very valid challenge—just as valid as who can be the most raw emotionally. I don't know why that is prioritized by a lot of people as something that's more valuable. The challenge I'm interested in being part of is who can use current technology, current images and people, to make the brightest, most intense, engaging thing.

And certainly, she spent her career making the brightest, loudest, most engaging, and provocative music of the last decade. Her 2018 album, *OIL OF EVERY PEARL'S UN-INSIDES* was one of the most innovative and transcendent releases of this century so far. Cover to cover, it is an experience unlike any other album ever released. It was an instant classic, immediately garnering so many reviews immediately saying it would go down in history as revolutionary. It certainly already has.



still from the music video for It's Okay to Cry

It's not just musically that SOPHIE was a trailblazer, but also in terms of representation. For the LGBT community, especially trans people, SOPHIE was such a powerful and meaningful representation of a trans woman who was successful and innovative, who dominated her field and forged new paths doing it.

I feel lucky to have been on the planet at the same time as her. We're all lucky to have witnessed the shining star that she was on this earth. And in the face of this tragedy, just like SOPHIE said, it's okay to cry.

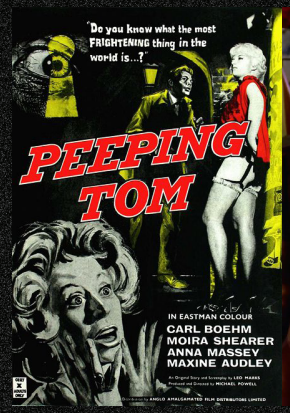
Rest in peace, angel. We'll miss you forever.

88.1 FM wrfl

Film Club

in this issue...

WRFL staff names some of their favorite films that are older than WRFL (films from before 1988)





Claire Thompson recommends...

Peeping Tom (1960)

dir. Michael Powell

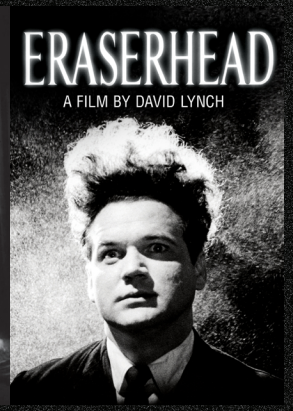
This movie came out the same year as *Psycho*, yet it effectively ended the illustrious career of director Michael Powell for being too upsetting and too horrific of a crime film, while at the same Alfred Hitchcock's career was being bolstered by the success of another film about a sinister weirdo. *Peeping Tom* is an intimate look at a killer, one of the first of its kind to be a film told from the perspective of and seen through the eyes of a prowler and criminal in a way that paints him as both evil and sympathetic. It's still a largely hidden gem and the black sheep of the career of Michael Powell, who was one of the most prolific British directors to ever live, despite the fact that this film was super innovative in its mode of storytelling. This movie is thrilling, upsetting, and visceral in a way that is super intense, especially for a film that's over 60 years old.



Reba Martinez recommends...

Eraserhead (1977)

dir. David Lynch



Editor's note: This is like one of my (Claire's) most favorite movies of all time. <3



Pink Flamingos is a classic John Waters film, starring the one and only Divine herself. The movie focuses on the story of Divine, the filthiest person in the world, her family, and her envious filth competitors. Not for the faint of heart, this movie has a big shock factor, but that's John Waters' style. Take it or leave it.

Lexi also recommends this film as a double feature with* Network, *see her review for that below...



Network is the well-known satire that served as a cautionary tale of what could happen when corporate media obsesses over ratings and profits at the expense of the health of society and people's lives. Some aspects of *Network* were a product of their time, but the central theme of the film was no less than prophetic: left unchecked, capitalist media will enable every worst impulse and exploit every last weakness until there's nothing left—and then it'll try to profit off of that, too. Much of *Network* has tragically played out in real life since its release 45 years ago, and watching it now brings that hard truth into stark focus—but it also makes me feel grateful for the non-corporate-controlled and non-profit-driven media that we do have, including (of course) our beloved station that has survived against all odds for 33 of those years.

Lexi O'Donnell also recommends* Network *as a double feature with* Pink Flamingos *(see her review of that film above):

Network is a story about a newscaster and as his career comes to an end, he makes a statement on air that changes not only his life but the functioning of the network itself and the country. I recommend this as a really bonkers double feature. These are two of my all time favorite movies separately, both pretty wild and the subjects are anything but conventional. Though the tones of these two movies are super different, this double feature would be an experience for sure.



A Film Noir that acknowledges the absurdity of the genre. For the best experience watch this film without looking up anything about it, even the casting.

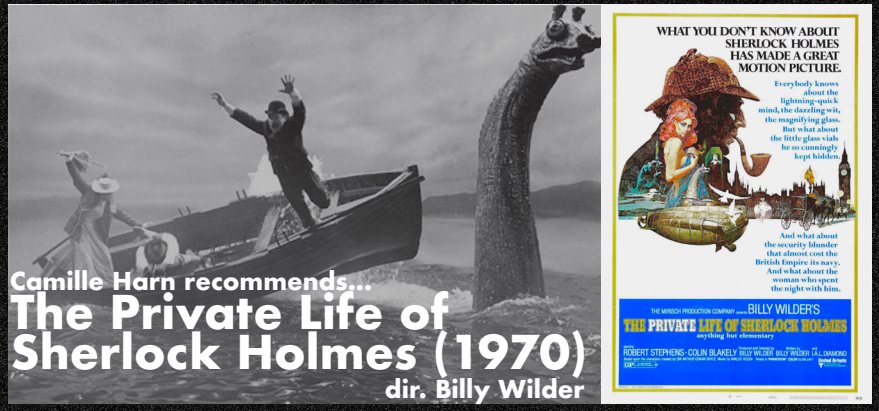


An amazing French film made in the noir style that explores themes of corruption, morality, and humanity. I loved the anonymous smear campaign plotline, the dark humor, and the general history behind making the film during German-occupied France during World War II. Catherine Stebbins has an amazing review on Letterboxd if you want more info!



A comedy from the days when moving the camera while filming might have still given audiences shock; *My Man Godferey* is an implausible story, but a warm and an enjoyable one.

The movie sells the contrasts between it's underclass beginnings and it's upper crust destination, the actors sell the chemistry and the comedy of their circumstances, and the writing, as can so easily age, manages not to. *My Man Godferey* is enjoyable for nearly any one, at nearly any time, nearly any where.



I <3 gay Sherlock Holmes. When Holmes is propositioned by a Russian ballerina to father her child, Sherlock explains that women "aren't his cup of tea," and John Watson "is his cup of tea." While the feelings that Holmes has for Watson aren't reciprocated, this is one of the few adaptations that even dares to go in that direction. Because of this, this is one of my favorite adaptations of the Sherlock Holmes stories.





Easily the best movie ever that came out before 1988, *Empire* is an iconic story that shaped my childhood even 30 years later. Where would we be without Luke knowing his dad is the big bad? Probably flying around in jetpacks with all the man-hours that's been wasted misquoting the most iconic line in cinema-twist history.







The film takes place in feudal Japan and follows the plot of Macbeth but with samurai. The character of Asaji (based on Lady Macbeth) is particularly fascinating because she is so starkly different from the traditional productions of Macbeth which can lead to some interesting commentary on the themes of gender and culture in the works.





I grew up watching this, and it's just a wholesome movie that fulfills an urge to live in the quiet, picturesque countryside... with a little help from Totoro!



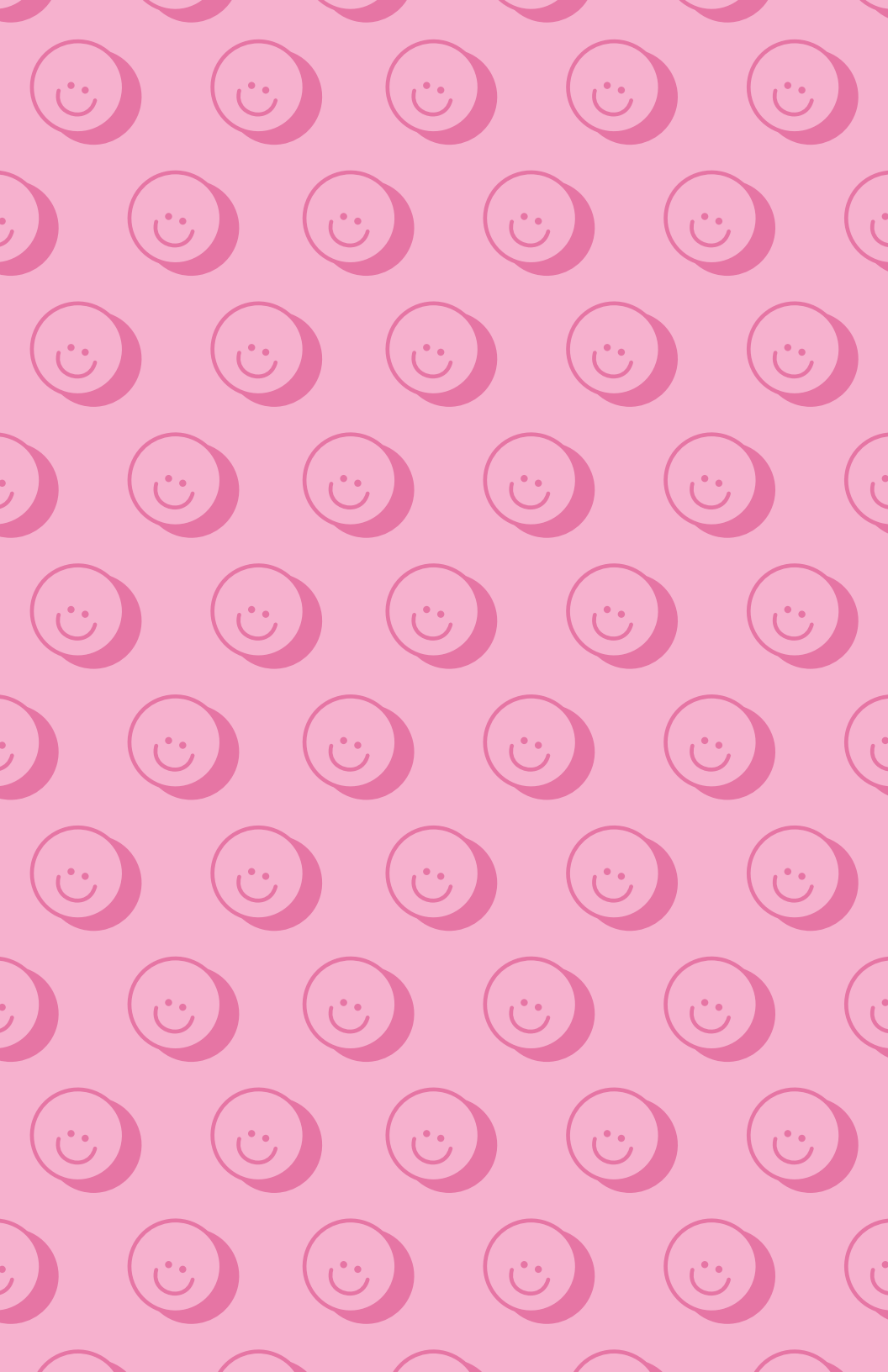
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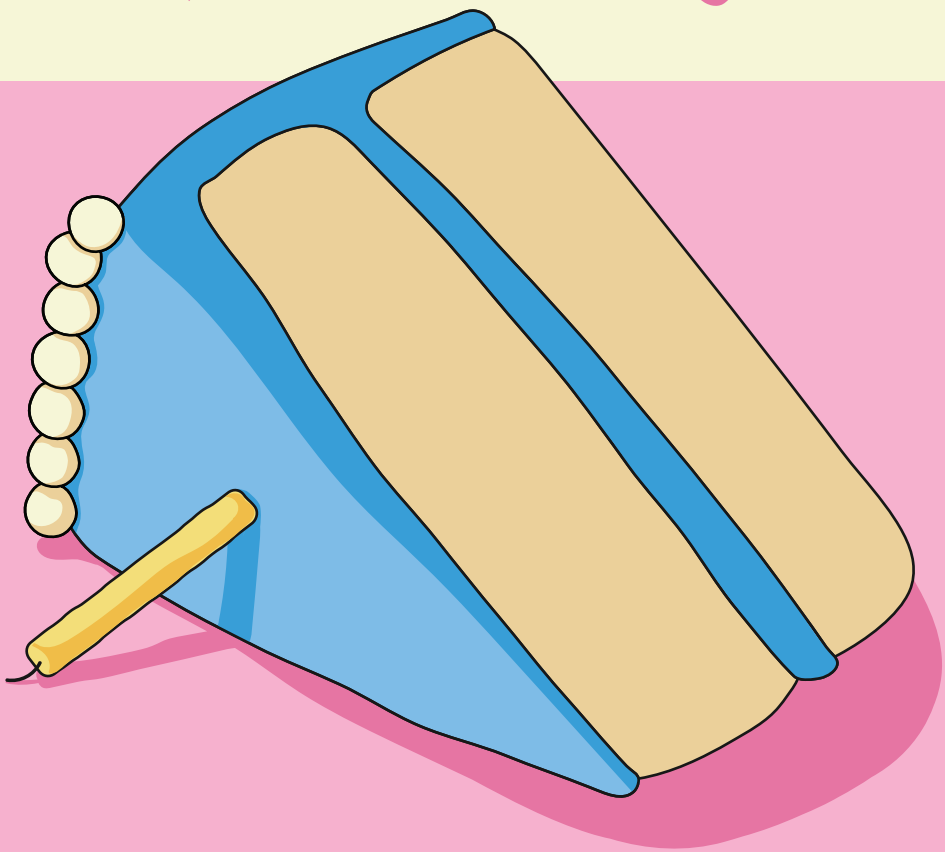
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